

# CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Buried Telecommunications Line	Proposed Implementation Date: November 20, 2009
Proponent: Nemont Telephone Cooperative, PO Box 600, Scobey, MT 59623-0600	
Type and Purpose of Action: Nemont Telephone Cooperative has submitted a Right of Way Easement Application to place a buried telecommunications line next to an existing underground telecommunication line. The new and old telecommunications lines will both be located on State Land in Section 16 of T29N, R58E. The natural resources to be impacted by this action are tame and native grasslands and the edge of a reclaimed gravel pit.	
Location: W2W2 of Section 16, Twp. 29N, Rge. 58E	County: Roosevelt

## I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.	The applicant has completed a Right of Way Application and submitted it to the Glasgow Unit Office. The purpose of the request is to place a new buried telecommunications line next to an old existing line. The new line will be placed in close proximity to the old underground line, so Nemont can tie the lines together and take advantage of the portions of the old line that still function properly.
2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:	The Federal Communications branch of the Federal Government may have jurisdiction for this type of project. There may also be other State of Montana agencies that may have jurisdiction for this project.
3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:	<p>Action Alternative: Grant a Right of Way Easement to Nemont Telephone Cooperative to place a new buried telecommunications line on State land</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Deny the Right of Way Easement requested by Nemont Telephone Cooperative to place a new buried telecommunications line on State Land.</p>

## II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS
	<p>N = Not Present or No Impact will occur.</p> <p>Y = Impacts may occur (explain below)</p>
4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compactible or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations?	Action: The action will temporarily disturb an area up to 10 feet on each side of a center line (20 feet total) along the W2W2 of the State land. The area will see minimal disturbances regarding the geology and soil characteristics within the project area. The disturbances will be temporary and the area will

## II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

	<p>continue to produce both tame and native grass vegetation.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the geology or soil characteristics will occur.</p>
5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or groundwater resources present? Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality?	<p>Action: The project will not impact the water quality, quantity, and/or distribution of surface water on or around the State land.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the water quality, quantity, and/or distribution will occur.</p>
6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?	<p>Action: The air quality may or may not be temporarily reduced during installation of the new line. The possible reduction will quickly return to normal if it is reduced by the construction. Small amounts of pollutants from machinery and particulates from the disturbance of the areas soil may be produced. The project area is located in an area subject to air quality regulations or zones.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the air quality will occur.</p>
7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?	<p>Action: The vegetation along the project area will be disturbed. This area has a history of being disturbed and contains vegetation well suited to take advantage of disturbed soils. The vegetation present will quickly reclaim the disturbed area. The area may or may not see a temporary decrease of vegetation quantity. No plant communities will be altered. No rare plants or cover are present.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the vegetation cover, quantity, and/or quality will occur.</p>
8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?	<p>Action: No impacts to terrestrial, avian, and/or aquatic life and habitats are anticipated to occur.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to terrestrial, avian, and/or aquatic life and habitats will occur.</p>
9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Sensitive Species or Species of special concern?	<p>Action: The project area does not contain or support any known unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources. No impacts to these resources are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources will occur.</p>
10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological	<p>Action: No impacts to the areas historical, archeological, and/or paleontological resources are</p>



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resources present?	<p>anticipated. GUO personnel inspected the area for any evidence of historical, archeological, and/or paleontological resources and did not find any evidence of these types of resources. Rock piles are present, but they are not consistent with Rock Cairn and/or driveline formations typically found in this area. The rock piles follow the edges of a previously bladed area which explains how they were likely formed. The area has a long history of disturbances including blading, addition and removal of material for purposes of building the adjacent county road, installation of a buried telecommunications line, installation of an overhead powerline, and impacts from the adjacent reclaimed gravel pit. DNRC Staff Archeologist recommends taking no further action regarding these resources.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the areas historical, archeological, and/or paleontological resources will occur.</p>
11.AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light?	<p>Action: The project is located next to a county road and will provide temporary impacts to the areas aesthetics. The area has been disturbed in the past and no long term impacts to the areas aesthetics are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the areas aesthetics will occur.</p>
12.DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project?	<p>Action: No impacts to the demands of environmental resources such as land, water, air, and/or energy resources are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the demands of environmental resources such as land, water, air, and/or energy resources will occur.</p>
13.OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?	<p>Action: No impacts to studies, plans, and/or projects are anticipated to occur.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to studies, plans, and/or projects will occur.</p>

## III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	<p>Action: The project may or may not create human health and/or safety risks during construction. The employer and employee identify these risks as</p>

	<p>occupational hazards. These risks would short term and present only during installation of the new line.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to human health and/or safety risks will occur.</p>
15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	<p>Action: No impacts to the industrial, commercial, and/or agricultural activities and production are anticipated. If the project proceeds and is finished, the project may provide benefits to these types of businesses via the ability to utilize the new telecommunications line.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the industrial, commercial, and/or agricultural activities and production will occur.</p>
16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.	<p>Action: No impacts to quantity and distribution of employment are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to quantity and distribution of employment will occur.</p>
17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?	<p>Action: No impacts to the state tax base and/or tax revenues are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the state tax base and/or tax revenues will occur.</p>
18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed?	<p>Action: No impacts to the level of demand for government services are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the level of demand for government services will occur.</p>
19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	<p>Action: No impacts to local environmental plans and goals are anticipated occur.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to local environmental plans and goals will occur.</p>
20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract?	<p>Action: No impacts to the quality of recreational and wilderness activities are anticipated occur. The State land is legally accessible and provides recreational opportunities. No wilderness areas are located within a close proximity to the proposed project area.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the quality of recreational and wilderness activities will occur.</p>
21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?	<p>Action: No impacts to the density and/or distribution of population and housing are anticipated to occur. The service provided by the new telecommunication line may or may not increase the likelihood of rural development in this area.</p>

	No Action: No impacts to the density and/or distribution of population and housing will occur.
22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	<p>Action: No impacts to the areas social structures and/or traditional lifestyles are anticipated to occur.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the areas social structures and/or traditional lifestyles will occur.</p>
23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	<p>Action: No impacts to the areas cultural uniqueness and/or diversity are anticipated to occur.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the areas cultural uniqueness and/or diversity will occur.</p>
24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:	<p>Action: The project will provide the opportunity for local businesses to supply the applicant with materials needed for installation of the telecommunications line and to supply the material used for the line itself. This opportunity may or may not benefit local businesses.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the social and economic circumstances will occur.</p>

EA Checklist Prepared By:



Matthew Poole (Land Use Specialist)

Date: November 19, 2009

IV. FINDING	
25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:	Select Action Alternative to install line.
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:	No impacts anticipated to reach significant level
27. Need for Further Environmental Analysis:	
<input type="checkbox"/> EIS <input type="checkbox"/> More Detailed EA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Further Analysis	



EA Checklist Approved By: R. Hoyt Richards Glasgow Unit Manager  
Name Title

R. Hoyt Richards  
Signature

Date: November 19, 2009